

itself in every change in the world of matter. Even matter itself is a manifestation of this infinite force, and all our thoughts are but forms of its motion. In this way the ideas of Plato lose their independent active existence, and become objects of thought, principles of knowledge; eternal, it is true, but only as the mind of man is eternal, and active only in his activity.

*Pam: Africa
Egypt*

ARTICLE VII.

NOTES ON EGYPTOLOGY.

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DR. BRUGSCH'S History of Egypt under the Pharaohs¹ will hardly prove what the Germans style an "epoch-making" book; but it certainly does mark an epoch in the science of Egyptology—the transformation of scattered individual monuments and dismembered inscriptions into a consecutive chronological history of the Egyptian empire. Thirty years ago Bunsen made his bold attempt to determine "Egypt's place in Universal History." The materials were not then ready for such an undertaking, and hence Bunsen's was too much a work of speculation to serve as a permanent basis of history. Yet Bunsen had the true notion of what was to be learned in Egypt, and through Egypt for the history of mankind, and though his methods were faulty and his results incomplete, his principles were unquestionably sound. He grasped the conception that the monuments of Egypt were true records of her chronology; that by means of the monuments it would be possible to restore the chronology embodied in the dynasties of Manetho; and that this chronology would furnish a sure foundation for Egyptian history. And he declared his confidence in this system of investigation in

¹ Geschichte Aegyptens unter den Pharaonen. Nach den Denkmälern bearbeitet von Dr. Heinrich Brugsch-Bey. Erste deutsche Ausgabe. Mit 2 Karten von Unter und Ober-Aegypten und 4 Genealogischen Tafeln. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs. 1877.

these prophetic words: "We are convinced that it may and will be the lot of our age to disentangle the clue of Egyptian chronology by the light of hieroglyphical science and the aid of modern historical research, even after the loss of so many invaluable records of the old world; and thus to fasten the thread of universal chronology round the apex of those indestructible pyramids, which are no longer closed and mysterious."¹ This prophecy is in part fulfilled in Brugsch-Bey's history, which is based directly upon the monuments, and is built up around a frame of chronology for which the monuments furnish materials vastly more abundant than were known in Bunsen's time. Indeed, since Dr. Brugsch published the first part of his *Monumental History of Egypt*² in 1859, researches, discoveries, interpretations, have so increased these materials that in this first German edition the author has been obliged to recast the whole work, and to modify opinions and conclusions then put forth with confidence.

With the candor of the scholar, Dr. Brugsch supplements the deficiencies and corrects the mistakes of his earlier attempt; but even the experience of twenty years does not seem to have taught him the caution which is as necessary to the historical critic as to the scientific investigator. His fancy is too ready to supply some coveted information; his enthusiasm sometimes gets the better of his judgment; and he often weaves into his historical narrative the loose strands of conjecture. These tendencies make it necessary for the reader to exercise the critical caution which is so often wanting in the author. Time has justified the habitual reserve with which, in former years, these "Notes on Egyptology" in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* have treated points of chronology and history. Dr. Brugsch has the merit of writing in a clear, direct style, with singleness of purpose, and with a complete mastery of his subject. An octavo of eight hundred pages of Egyptian history as constructed from the

¹ *Egypt's Place in Universal History*, Vol. i. Introduction.

² *Histoire d'Égypte. Première Partie, L'Égypte sous les Rois indigènes*. 1859.

monuments challenges a close scrutiny of the materials and their authority. How much, then, do we really know of ancient Egypt as authentic history? In other words, to what extent does the reading of the hieroglyphs supply us with trustworthy materials for the history of Egypt? The following facts may be regarded as settled to the acceptance of all Egyptologists.

1. The hieroglyphs are of a mixed character; partly pictorial, partly phonetic; the pictorial signs being divided into special and general, the phonetic into alphabetic and syllabic. The scheme of interpretation based upon this discovery of *Champollion le Jeune*, in 1823, is confirmed beyond question by the bilingual "Tablet of Canopus," discovered in 1866.¹ The mode of decipherment being thus conclusively established, the interpretation of hieroglyphic records and inscriptions is simply a matter of patience and detail. "So great has been the progress made that the purport of all texts, and the entire translation of most, is no longer an object of insurmountable difficulty."²

2. Menes is an historical person, the first known king of Egypt; that is, he appears not only in traditions and legends, but upon the monuments in dry chronological tables, heading the list of kings. Hence it is evident that the Egyptians regarded him as a real person, distinctly dividing the historical from the mythological, the human from the divine. These stone records give Menes a more certain place in history than can be claimed for Arthur of Britain.

3. The great Pyramid dates from the Fourth Dynasty, as is proved by the names found in its inner chambers, and is an imperishable monument of the strength and grandeur of Egypt in that remote antiquity and within so short a period, say three or four hundred years, after the consolidation of the kingdom by Menes.

4. The dynasties of Manetho were for the most part consecutive; and though it is still an open question whether

¹ See a description of this Tablet in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. xxiv. p. 771.

² Dr. S. Birch in "Transactions of the Second International Congress of Orientalists." Inaugural Address, p. 13.

some dynasties were not contemporaneous, all Egyptologists agree in recognizing them "as representing strata of time."¹ The two lists of the first Pharaohs, found in the temple of Abydos, the list found at Sakkarah,² and a fourth, in a private tomb at Thebes, show conclusively that Manetho's lists must have been compiled from records and monuments which, in his time, were regarded as chronological lists of consecutive dynasties. True or false, this was the notion the Egyptians had of their own royal succession. The question of time, that is, of the duration of these dynasties, in the absence of conclusive dates, is quite distinct from the fact of chronological order, though the order of succession furnishes a proximate rule for the computation of time.

More weighty even than these monumental lists in evidence of consecutive dynasties is the fact that memorials of kings whose capital was in Upper Egypt have been found in Lower Egypt, and *vice versa*. Professor Richard Owen put this point forcibly in his Address to the Congress of Orientalists at London.³ "If, for example, statues and laudatory memorials of the kings of a Memphite dynasty were found only in Lower Egypt, and those of kings of an Elephantine dynasty only in Upper Egypt, there would be ground for suspicion that the Egyptian priest had aggrandized the rule of both series of limited monarchs, and had lengthened out their history by making certain dynasties successive which had, in fact, reigned contemporaneously. There were periods, indeed, when Upper and Lower Egypt had respectively their own Pharaohs, but the normal relations of such were hostile. Manetho records such conditions of the monarchy, and notes some of the Theban kings as contemporaries of the Shepherd Kings reigning at Tanis. But a Pharaoh of the lower country permitted not his usually hostile contemporary in the upper country to dedicate to himself monuments at Tanis; nor

¹ Dr. S. Birch, "Rede Lecture at Cambridge University." 1876.

² For an account of the lists of Sakkarah and Abydos, see *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. xxiv. p. 773.

³ Transactions of the Second International Congress of Orientalists, Ethnological Section, p. 366.

would a Theban king permit a Hyksos one to set up his abhorred image at Elephantine. The discovery, therefore, by Mariette, of such monuments of one and the same Pharaoh, or dynasty of Pharaohs, occurring the whole length of Egypt,¹ from north to south, is a scientific fact testifying to the truth of the lists of the successive kings recorded by the Egyptian priests. Testimonies by contemporary sculptors have proved, for example, the Sixth Dynasty, which chose for its capital Elephantine, to have succeeded the Fifth Dynasty, which chose for its place of business Memphis. They have similarly and satisfactorily demonstrated the Fourteenth Dynasty of Xoïs to have succeeded, in time, the Thirteenth Dynasty of Thebes."

5. Lower Egypt was invaded and conquered by roving tribes from the east — the Hyksos or Shepherds of Manetho — who for centuries maintained their dominion in the Delta, and broke the continuity of the Egyptian empire. These Shepherd kings were at last expelled by Aahmes or Amasis I. and with them a promiscuous host, "a mixed multitude," contemptuously described as the "plagues" or "lepers."

6. The Eighteenth Dynasty, which began with Aahmes, lifted Egypt to the height of splendor at home and of power abroad. Under Thotmes III. the conquests of Egypt extended to Nineveh and Babylon in the east, to Nubia in the south, and to the islands of the Mediterranean in the north and west. "This was the apogee of Egyptian greatness, and it is scarcely possible to realize the relative magnificence of the period. The inscriptions relating to the time on the walls of Thebes, translated to Germanicus, astonished the Roman masters of Egypt and the civilized world. A pylon at Thebes gives twelve hundred names of places conquered or garrisoned by the Egyptians."² The glory of Thotmes was subsequently rivalled by that of Ramses II. of the Nineteenth Dynasty, the Sesostris of the Greeks.

7. There are important synchronisms with Syria and

¹ Professor Owen here follows the classification of dynasties given by Manetho. Brugsch, for example, assigns the Fifth to Elephantine, and the Fourth and Sixth to Memphis.

² Birch, Rede Lecture, p. 26.

Persia in the later period of the Egyptian empire, which serve as guides to the chronology of the Egyptian kings.

Every point stated in the above specifications is distinctly supported by the monuments and records of Egypt; and it will at once be seen that these furnish a good back-bone of chronology and a tolerably well articulated skeleton of history. But when we attempt to construct the body, with form, organs, integuments, life, the real difficulty begins.

With all his research, acumen, industry, enthusiasm, Dr. Brugsch has not established the chronology of Egypt, nor any one satisfactory date in that remote antiquity which possesses the highest interest for the elucidation of both biblical history and the general history of mankind. A glance at his table of royal epochs is a most disappointing sequel to his glowing pages. It is easy to mark the dates of the conquest of Egypt by Alexander, and two centuries before by Cambyzes; and we may feel our way back, step by step, to the close of the sixth century before Christ, and may gain two or three proximate dates in the tenth and eleventh centuries B.C.; but when from the twelfth century onward our author assigns to each reign an average of thirty-three years, allowing but three reigns to a century, and his columns read 1200, 1233, 1266, 1300, 1333, 1366, and so on back to 4400 B.C. as the date of Menes, we see that such tables are as really "cooked" as are the antediluvian tables of the Septuagint. Dr. Brugsch assumes that the first sixty-five names of the royal tablet of Abydos represent not only the regular official succession, but also the direct lineal succession from father to son, in the house of Menes. Then, taking as a basis the calculation of Herodotus, that on an average three successive lives of the same stock fill out a century, he gives to these sixty-five kings a range of two thousand one hundred and sixty-six years before the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, which he assigns to the year 1558 B.C.—thus making a total of three thousand seven hundred and twenty-four years. But he also allows five hundred years for the interruption of the Egyptian

monarchy by the Hyksos invasion, and hence goes back to the forty-first century B.C. for the ascension of Menes to the throne.¹ Now this whole calculation proceeds upon a purely artificial theory; and, though the condition of Egypt at that early period seems to have favored stability and longevity, yet the monuments show the frequency of wars and the habitual exposure of the king in battle. Hence, in view of the ordinary vicissitudes of government, history teaches that we must allot to sovereigns a shorter term than the average of human life,—say, five or six reigns to a century, rather than three. This would reduce the era of Menes to about 3000 B.C., “the lowest point to which a chronologist can venture to depress the date of Menes.”² The following are the principal dates, B.C., to which German Egyptologists have assigned the beginning of the Egyptian kingdom: Boeckh, 5702; Unger, 5613; Brugsch, 4455; Lauth, 4157; Lepsius, 3892; Bunsen, 3623—a difference of two thousand and seventy-nine years. And, be it remembered, in the first eighteen dynasties not one solitary date has been fixed with absolute certainty as a point for evolving the chronology of the period.

It is a great advance toward historical certainty to have fixed with so much definiteness the names of the kings of Egypt and the order of their succession. What is yet wanting is the date of the accession of some of the leading Pharaohs of the older time. This once made sure, it may be possible to frame a chronology of Egypt that shall elucidate or rectify the chronology of the Hebrews.

It is another gain for historical truth that the domination of the Hyksos in the eastern delta is established by contemporary monuments, and the era of their expulsion is celebrated in a hymn of triumph. But the origin of these invaders and the dates of their coming and going are still involved in mystery. “These *Shasu* are not merely shepherds, but nomads, the crossers of the desert, the wanderers of the world, or pillagers, the tribes that migrated from place to place; the advanced guards of Asia carry Egypt by storm.”³ The

¹ pp. 37–39. ² Birch, Rede Lecture, p. 8. ³ Birch, Rede Lecture, p. 23.

attempt to connect the Hebrews with these "shepherds," and the Exodus with their expulsion, has not proved successful. The discovery of the Hebrews under the name of *Aperin* on the monuments¹ is brought in question by the subsequent finding of the *Aperin* on monuments much earlier, and also much later, than the reign of Ramses II., to which the exodus is usually assigned. It is not unlikely, however, that in Egypt, as in Babylon, some of the Hebrews chose to remain after the great body of the people had departed.

Dr. Brugsch revives the theory of the exodus which he propounded at the Congress of Orientalists in London.² He brings nothing new in the way of argument or evidence, and as yet he has not won a single Egyptologist of note to a theory which demands so many conjectures in geography and such fanciful analogies in philology.

The great service which Dr. Brugsch has done in this work is the bringing together of a mass of materials — inscriptions, tables, documents, etc., — systematically arranged and lucidly interpreted, so as to give to the monumental remains of Egypt the form and expression of an intelligible consecutive history, covering unnumbered centuries. And what a history it is! Sculptured on these monuments, sketched on these fragments of papyrus, portrayed on the walls of these temples and tombs, is an empire great in power, war, and dominion, great in architecture, science, and the arts of life — an empire that for a hundred generations withstood the forces of time and decay, and that even in its ruins represents the oldest, and as yet the most enduring, civilization upon the surface of the globe. It is a notable achievement of modern science thus to repeople the Egypt of the Pharaohs with a nation whose language we can decipher, whose thoughts and doings we can read, whose manners we can study, whose government, society, worship we can reconstruct, and whose life, so long mummified and entombed, we can make as vivid as a traveller's sketches of the Egypt of the Khedive.

¹ Chabas, Melanges. 1862.

² See *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. xxxii. p. 185.